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ABSTRACT

A multimedia pilot program at Laramie County Community College, Wyoming, used a series of instructional modules with testing units to allow freshman composition students to review their own particular areas of weakness, to test themselves, and to move on at their own pace. The program used the technologies available in the school's state-of-the-art multimedia center and classrooms. Four areas became the foci of the multimedia project--grammar/mechanical abilities, composition skills, computer literacy, and research skills. All students who have thus far interacted with any of the modules have had nothing but positive responses to the multimedia aspects. Students, at their own initiative, keep coming back and playing with the modules just to see how their scores have improved. The modules are appropriate for both in-house and distance learning environments. (An accompanying booklet provides background on the Laramie County Community College, a flow chart for each of the 4 modules, 4 sample computer screens from the modules, a sample print-out of test results, and 2 additional sample computer screens.) (RS)

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INTERACTIVE FRESHMAN COMPOSITION: USING TOOLBOOK TO WRITE IT RIGHT

Presented at the November 14, 1996, League for Innovation, Phoenix, Arizona by Mary Hart, Patricia Landy, George Purdy, instructors, and Chuck Thompson, Associate Dean Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Definition

This multimedia presentation explains why we have designed the English instructional modules, what the focus of the modules is, and how they can effectively be used to enhance a student-centered learning environment.

Rationale

Both our former writing placement exam and our new computerized COMPASS exam indicate that entering college students have significant writing problems. Even students who qualify for Freshman Composition can benefit from a review of mechanical and grammatical rules, since the lack of these skills will ensure less clear writing. Consequently, an English instructor with twenty to twenty-five students in each writing section does not have time to teach the primary writing skills and to review the mechanical errors.

The solution seemed obvious: develop a series of instructional modules with testing units which would allow students to review their own particular areas of weaknesses, to test themselves, and to move on at their own pace. Furthermore, we wanted to use the technologies available in the school's state-of-the-art multimedia center and classrooms.

Everything came together--an educational need, highly motivated faculty, and the correct technology.

The Freshman Composition course was chosen as the pilot program because every student who attends LCCC must take ENGL 1010. Therefore, the development process was cost effective because it positively affected a large percentage of the student body and provided a model for future multimedia efforts.

The Design Process

The first step consisted of canvassing the English department faculty to determine the most relevant needs. Despite differences in pedagogy, all eight instructors agreed that the problem areas included grammar/mechanics abilities, composition skills, computer literacy, and research skills. Those four areas became the foci of the multimedia project, and hence, the interface was developed. Flow charts, outlining each separate component of each problem area, were designed to guide the creation of each module.

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Demonstration

The first segment of the presentation demonstrates the computer literacy module. Our students use WordPerfect 6.1 as their writing software program. Two years ago we assembled a WordPerfect Skills Manual designed specifically for MLA formats. This content was transferred into a multimedia format using Asymetrix ToolBook 3.0. The Skills Manual now exists as a student-centered, interactive multimedia program. The presentation demonstrates the program's ability to allow students to teach themselves the computer skills necessary to master the computer's efficacy in writing.

The second segment of the presentation demonstrates the grammar/mechanics module. Our English faculty unanimously agreed that our students need more work on certain problem areas than class time allows. The module consists of a pretest which features a printout of the students' responses to the test. Using this diagnostic tool, the students can then remediate weaknesses by way of the self-paced learning modules. These include Subject-Verb Agreement, Pronouns, Adjectives and Adverbs, and Punctuation. Each module consists of a large bank of questions, and at any one time, a randomized set is presented to the students. The exercises ask students to decide if a written sample is correct or incorrect, or it asks them to select a correct response from three possible choices. Each page of every module contains both a general and a specific help button. The students can check their progress by taking the posttest. The score button on the last page of each module provides the student immediate feedback.

The third segment demonstrates the research module. This module was designed to show students how to do an Internet search. Again, the department had created a manual for students, so the design consisted of transferring the manual into an interactive program. In this module, students are shown a sample Internet search, then prompted to do their own search.

The final segment demonstrates the composition module. In this segment, the steps of creating a document are profiled, along with a sample rough draft and a final draft of the same paper. Students are expected to extrapolate the steps of the writing process to all the papers they must write.

Student Reaction

All students who have thus far interacted with any of the modules have had nothing but positive responses to the multimedia aspects. Those students who admitted they hated the traditional grammar exercises were enthusiastic and motivated to explore their weaknesses. In fact, students, at their own initiative, keep coming back and playing with the modules just to see how their scores have improved.

Efficacy

These modules are appropriate for both in-house and distance learning environments. LCCC will install these programs in computer labs, on satellite campuses, on dormitory computers, and on the Internet.

Interactive Freshman Composition:

Presented by:

Patricia Landy
Mary Hart
Chuck Thompson

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LARAMIE
COUNTY
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE



Using Toolbook To Write It Right

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Rationale: The Use of Multimedia in Freshman Composition

Both our former writing placement exam and our new computerized COMPASS exam indicate that entering college students have significant writing problems. Even students who qualify for English 1010 can benefit from a review of mechanical and grammatical rules since the lack of these skills will ensure less clear writing. Yet, an English instructor with twenty to twenty-five students in each writing section does not have time to teach the primary writing skills and review the mechanical errors.

The solution seemed obvious: develop a series of instructional modules with testing units which would allow students to review their own particular areas of weaknesses, test themselves, and move on at their own pace. Further, with a state-of-the-art multimedia center and classroom, we wanted to use these technologies.

Everything came together – an educational need, highly motivated faculty, and the correct technology.

LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Laramie County Community College, established in 1968, is a public, comprehensive community college located in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Serving both Laramie County and Albany County in southeastern Wyoming, the college has a modern campus on 271 acres, located immediately southeast of the city. The college also has an Adult Learning Center in downtown Cheyenne. In addition, LCCC has classrooms and offices in Laramie, Wyoming, for its Outreach Center and Adult Learning Center. The college conducts an outreach program in eastern Laramie County as well.



Among the college's 268 full-time employees are 85 instructional faculty, who are augmented by 150 adjunct faculty. They serve 4,450 full-time students and 2,250 part-time students taking a wide variety of continuing education and community service classes.

Students may choose from 52 academic programs that lead to either associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of applied science degrees, as well as 15 occupational programs that offer certificates of completion. The college also offers GED certificate preparation classes and testing, English as a second language and citizenship preparation classes, adult basic education, and functional academic skills classes.

The mission of Laramie County Community College is to offer high-quality, post-secondary



education and a climate that encourages intellectual, professional, and personal development and extend an intellectual, professional, and personal development and extend an active leadership role in the economic development of the region. The college seeks to provide a dynamic learning environment and excellent learning opportunities to the people of southeastern Wyoming and the surrounding region by offering comprehensive programs in academic as well as occupational-technical subjects. Laramie County Community College is a low-tuition, open-access institution focusing on academic transfer programs, career and occupational programs, developmental and basic skills instruction, adult and continuing education, public and community services programming, and student support services.

Composition Skills

Invention Strategies

Focus and Organization

5-paragraph composition

Structure

Thesis Statement

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Topic Sentences

Development

Examples

Description

Definition

Facts/Statistics

Question

Purpose/Audience

Modes

Narrative

Summary/Response

Process Analysis

Definition/Classification

Contrast/Comparison

Causal Analysis

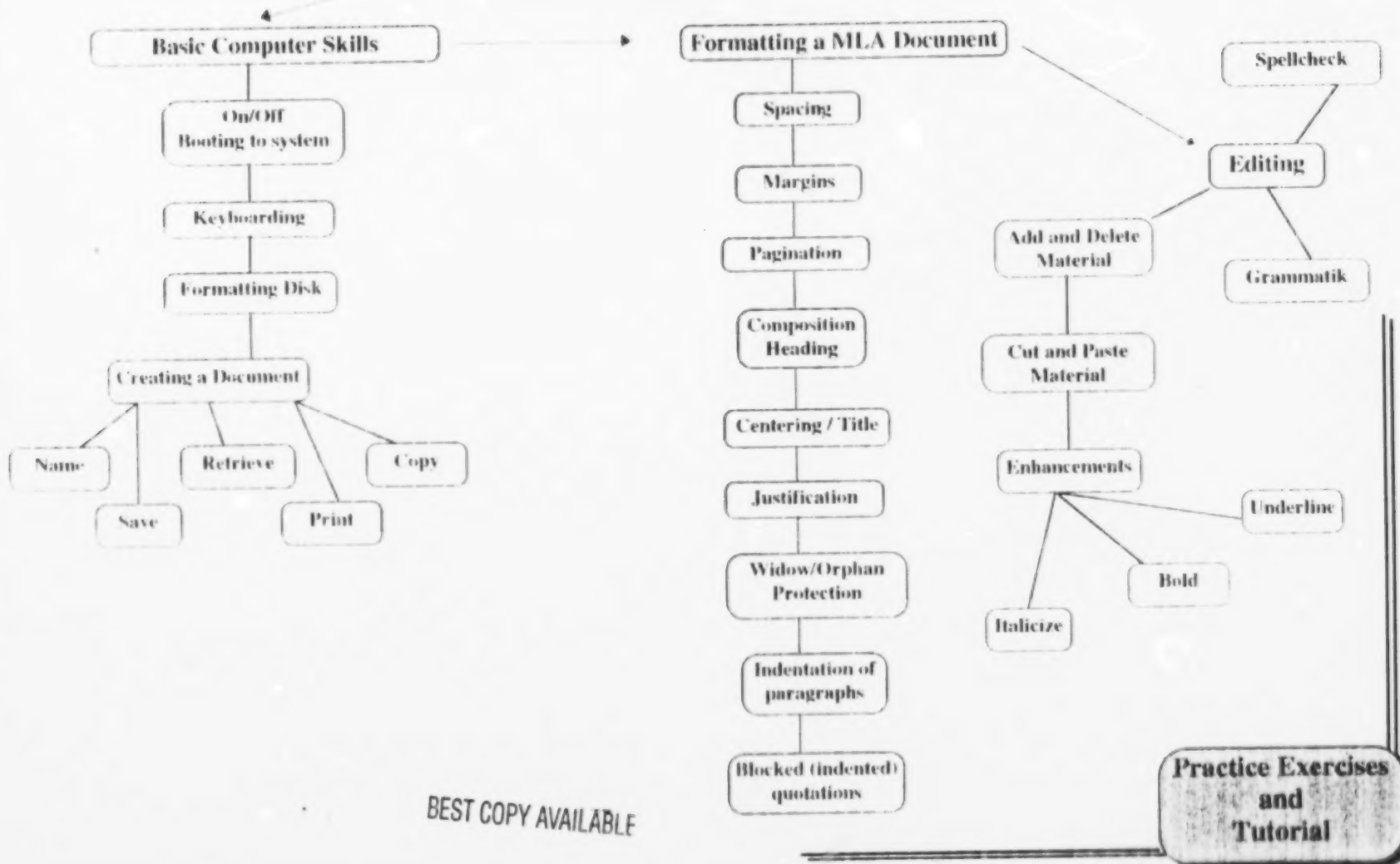
Argumentative/Persuasive

Unity/Coherence

Voice/Tone

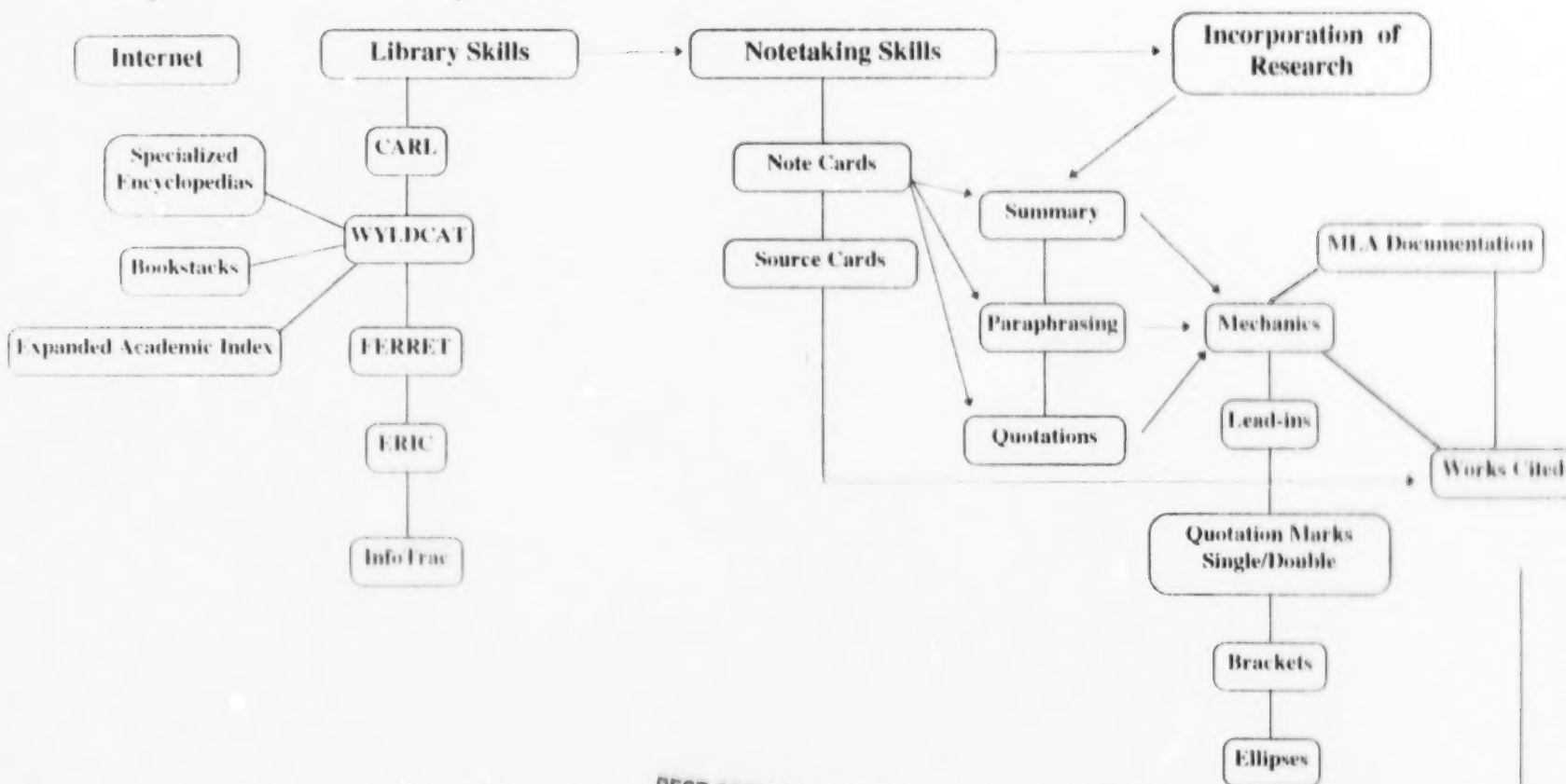
Practice Exercises and Tutorial

Computer Skills



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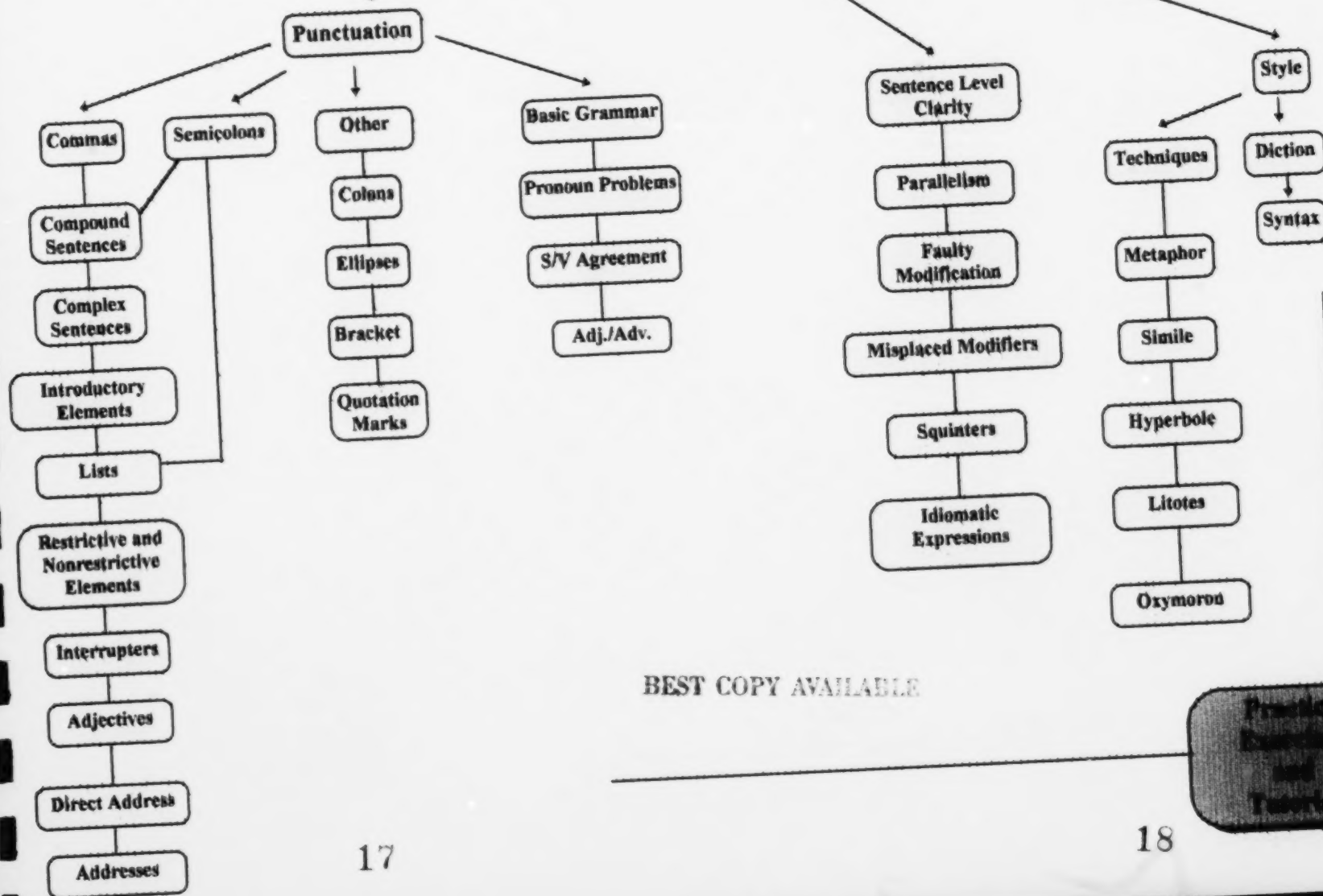
Research Skills



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RESEARCH SKILLS
AND
TECHNIQUES

Grammar Skills



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Pre-Test	Punctuation
Pronouns	Modifiers
Subject-Verb Agreement	Sentence-Level Clarity
Adjectives and Adverbs	Post-Test

Pronouns

Pronoun Reference
Pronoun Agreement
Pronoun Case

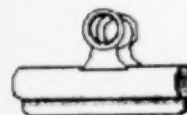


Subject-Verb Agreement

PUNCTUATION



Help
Exit



Enter | Left | Right
Exit

Adjectives and Adverbs

English Pretest

You will have twenty minutes in which to complete this test. Click the appropriate response box to indicate the grammatically correct answer for each question. There is only one correct answer for each.

Grammar

Menu

Previous

Next

Exit

English Post-test

You will have twenty minutes in which to complete this test. Click the appropriate response box to indicate the grammatically correct answer for each question. There is only one correct answer for each.

☐ Grammar

☐ Menu

☐ Previous

☐ Next

☒ Exit

21 04

Time used	Max Time	Last response
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----- SESSION START -----
STUDENT II COURSE English Post test
BOOK C \AUSERS\PATLANDY\LEAGUE\PATPOST IBK
---- LOG START ---- 10/15/96 9 26 04 PM
9 26 05 PM Page Title
9 27 16 PM Page New Page Existing Background
9 27 18 PM Page ID 0
9 27 27 PM Page Question 38
9 27 31 PM Page Question 37
9 27 32 PM Page Question 25
9 27 33 PM Page Question 10
9 27 35 PM Page Question 12
9 27 36 PM Page Question 29
9 27 37 PM Page Question 15
9 27 37 PM Page Question 3
9 27 38 PM Page Question 6
9 27 40 PM Page Question 34
9 27 41 PM Page Question 5
9 27 42 PM Page Question 23
9 27 43 PM Page Question 19
9 27 43 PM Page Question 2
9 27 44 PM Page Question 16
9 27 45 PM Page Question 30
9 27 46 PM Page Question 39
9 27 47 PM Page Question 26
9 27 48 PM Page Question 14
9 27 52 PM Page Question 32
9 27 52 PM Page Question 21
9 27 54 PM Page Question 4
9 28 13 PM Page Question 1
9 28 14 PM Page Question 33
9 28 15 PM Page Question 7
9 28 15 PM Page Question 24
9 28 16 PM Page Question 35
9 28 17 PM Page Question 20
9 28 17 PM Page Question 40
9 28 18 PM Page Question 13
9 28 18 PM Page Question 17
9 28 19 PM Page Question 28
9 28 19 PM Page Question 18

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Reports

Arguing for a Solution

Definition

To argue for a solution means that you will offer a solution to a problem. You will prove that your solution is more effective than any other offered solution, including the one currently in effect. Then, you will refute any arguments offered against your solution.



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Summary

Summary:

The Selection of Main Ideas



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